

We can change the world one child at a time

“Every child deserves to be cared for in a very loving and nurturing environment,” said Linda Patrick, owner of Rising Stars Home Daycare. And that is exactly what she has done for the last four years for children in her own home. But now she has expanded to a 4,400-square-foot child care center with a U.S. Small Business Administration 7(a) guaranteed loan for construction and operating expenses, a \$30,000 grant from Boone Early Childhood Partners which has paid for new classroom toys and equipment, a microloan of \$13,000 for working capital, and a \$75,000 grant from the State of Missouri under the Missouri Preschool Project. With a little guidance from a 25-member community advisory panel, Linda’s dream has become a reality. “For a single mom running a business, Linda is unusually persistent in finding funds to make her business successful,” commented Bill Lloyd, loan officer of Premier Bank and member of the advisory panel.

The new facility will be licensed by the State of Missouri for 70 children. “The location of the new center, Nanny’s Neighborhood Childcare Center, is in a low-income, centrally located area in Columbia with public housing in the immediate vicinity,” said Linda. “The center will be open to any child in need of child care, but my plan is to target the low to medium income population. I currently care for children who are being funded by the Division of Family Services program and I hope to make more slots available to these families who are unable to afford quality child care otherwise.”

Linda currently employs 4 part-time people, but when Nanny’s develops, she hopes to employ 8-10, depending on enrollment. “I plan to have all my teachers participate in training that will lead to their obtaining CDA credentials. They will all be certified in CPR and first aid,” said Linda. She plans to offer child care during the day and evening and hopes to expand to offer life skills courses to the parents of these children.

Donna Delong Hamilton of Enterprise Development Corporation said that Linda “is a very civic-minded person.” Donna has been working with a group in Columbia to make microloans to small businesses like Linda’s obtainable. Bill Lloyd said, “She is a wonderful person.”

Linda does not expect to make a lot of money running the expanded childcare center. “I know I won’t make much as long as I keep rates affordable for low-income families, but that is not the point. I grew up in this area, so for me it’s bringing it back home for the children of this area.”

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Taken from the Columbia Daily Tribune, Tuesday, June 8, 2004, “Loan plan under development” by Christi Nies.